

NUTRITION

Diet: Tips for Improving Your Health - Part Two

Won't it be hard to change my diet?

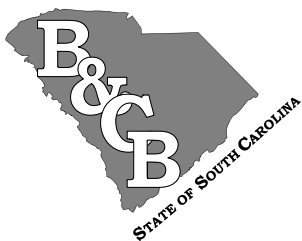
Not necessarily. But it will take time, so try not to get discouraged. The key is to keep trying to eat the right foods and stay in touch with your doctor and nutritionist, to let them know how you're doing. Here are a few suggestions to help you change your diet:

- Find the strong points and weak points in your current diet: Do you eat 3 to 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day? Do you get enough calcium? Do you eat high-fiber foods regularly? If so, good! You're on the right track. Keep it up. If not, you can learn the changes you need to make.
- Make small, slow changes, instead of trying to make large, fast changes. This will make it easier for the changes to become a part of your everyday life.
- Every few days keep track of your food intake by writing down what you ate and drank that day. Use this record to help you see if you need to eat more from any food groups, such as fruits, vegetables or dairy products.
- Think about asking for help from a nutritionist, if you haven't already done so-- especially if you have a medical problem that requires you to follow a special diet.

Can I trust nutrition information I get from newspapers and magazines?

Nutrition tips from different sources can sometimes conflict with each other. You should always check with your doctor first. Also, keep in mind this advice:

- There is no "magic bullet" when it comes to nutrition. There isn't one diet that works for every person. You need to find a diet that works for you.
- Good nutrition doesn't come in a vitamin pill. You can take a vitamin pill to be sure you're getting enough vitamins and minerals, but your body benefits the most from eating healthy foods.
- Eating all different kinds of foods is best for your body. Learn to try new foods.
- Fad diets offer short-term changes, but good health comes from long-term effort and commitment.
- Stories from people who have used a diet program or product, especially in commercials and infomercials, is a way to sell more of the product. Remember weight gain or other problems that come up after the program is over are never talked about in the ads.



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